Strike by Officers of the Indian Overseas Bank, Delhi

328. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what were the causes of the recent strike by Indian Overseas Bank officers of Delhi Zone;

(b) whether Government have received any representation about their demands; and

(c) if so, what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPEN DITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B.K. GADHVI) : (a) (c) Indian Overseas Bank has reported that a section of the officers agitated over the transfer orders issued by the Management to certain office bearers of the Officers Association and for settlement of certain other issues. The Manage ment has since held discussions with the Association and the agitation has been suspended restoring the normalcy.

Introduction of electronic voting machines during general elections

329. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce electronic voting machines *ia* many areas during the next general elections of Lok Sabha;

(b) if so, the States and constituencies in which such machines are likely to be used; and

(c) the extent to which the rural people in those constituencies would be able to cast their votes through such machines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ) : (a) The electronic voting machines are proposed to be pressed into service in the next General Elections in constituencies identified as sensitive.

(b) These have to be identified by the Election Commission, this Process has not yet been completed.

(c) The electronic voting machine is very simple to operate. People in the rural or backward areas are not likely to find any difficulty in exercising their franchise through this machine.

National Sericulture Project through World Bank Assistance

330. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Will the Minister of TEX-TILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to launch an ambitious Rs. 550 crore National Sericulture Project with the World Bank assistance to improve silk production in the country and for its exports; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE) : (a) and (b) The implementation of the National Sericulture Project with an outlay of Rs. 555.30 crore, has already commenced in the current financial year. The Project, which is being implemented with World Bank and Swiss assistance, is spread over a period of 5 years and envisages an increase in silk production of 6000 tonnes by the end of the project period over the present level of production of approximately 9000 tonnes. In view of the anticipated increase in production, a target of Rs. 850 crores has been fixed for export of natural silk goods by the terminal year of the project.